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Second District

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Third District

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Fourth District

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Fifth District



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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

August 29, 2017

Honorable Patricia Kelly
Presiding Judge
Santa Barbara Superior Court
County Courthouse
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara CA 93101

Reference: Response to FY 2016-17 Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury report titled, "Public Safety Radio Coverage," (Published June 19, 2017 Grand Jury Website).

Judge Kelly:

Please find attached the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) response to the above referenced Civil Grand Jury Report. As directed by the Grand Jury, all responses are provided in accordance with Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code.

The Board appreciates the work conducted by the Sheriff and the General Services Department and their assistance in responding to this matter.

Sincerely,

Joan Hartmann, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

CC: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Mary Tighe, Foreperson, 2017-18 Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2016-2017 Report
Public Safety Radio Coverage

Finding 3

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Deputies in the Cuyama area are operating in a rural area with extremely poor radio communications.

The Board partially disagrees with the finding. Approximately two-thirds of Cuyama Valley is covered by transmissions. An additional site in the Cuyama area would provide stronger signals and more complete coverage.

Recommendation 3

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office join with the Santa Barbara County and Ventura County Fire Departments in the installation of a radio tower to be located in Kern County that will ensure that all agencies are able to communicate throughout the Cuyama area.

The recommendation will not be implemented. There are several options, not involving Kern or Ventura counties, these options include establishing a new transmission site in Santa Barbara County at Fire Station 41, or on a more elevated platform utilizing privately owned property, or develop the Pelato Peak site, which would be the most effective solution to provide coverage for the Cuyama area.

Finding 4

Most public safety agencies in Santa Barbara County are not using the 700 MHz radio band.

The Board agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 4

That Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors upgrade all Santa Barbara County public safety radios to the 700 MHz band as recommended by the Federal Communications Commission and the State of California.

The recommendation will not be implemented. The County has started a comprehensive Public Radio System Upgrade Project. An RFP was issued and we are currently evaluating the responses to determine the most qualified telecommunication vendor. The selected vendor will identify the County's needs while maintaining connectivity with its mutual aid partner's. Moving to the 700 MHz band option will be one of several options under consideration. This is a long-term, multi-year project that will require substantial analysis and funding.